

BIBLE BAPTIST CHURCH OF ERIE

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“LOOKING UP IN FAITH”

HEBREWS 11:1-7

Faith is a common denominator. Everyone alive daily expressed faith in something. No one can live a single day without exercising faith. So, faith is central to all of life. For example, you go to a doctor whose name you cannot pronounce and whose degrees you have never verified. He gives you a prescription you cannot read. You take it to a pharmacist you have never seen before. He gives you a chemical compound you do not understand. Then you go home and take the pill according to the instructions on the bottle. All in trusting, sincere faith!

Webster’s dictionary defines faith as *“Unquestioning belief; complete trust or confidence; loyalty.”* It also states that it is often associated with a relationship to God. Each of us regardless of our backgrounds or educations, our social status or our talents can express faith. The difference between the faith we exercise in our daily routine and our religious faith is the object of that faith.

This morning we are talking about **“Looking Up In Faith”** from one of the greatest teaching in the Bible on the subject of faith found in the eleventh chapter of the book of Hebrews. Today I want us to see two things; **“WHAT FAITH IS AND WHAT FAITH DOES.”**

I. WHAT FAITH IS (*Hebrews 11:1-3*)

To understand what faith is, we must get past certain misconceptions about faith.

- ◇ First, that faith is the ability to manipulate God.
- ◇ Second, that faith is adherence to a set of beliefs.
- ◇ Third, that faith is a blind leap into the dark.
- ◇ Finally, that faith is simply devotion to whatever god one happens to follow.

Hebrews chapter eleven portrays what real biblical faith looks like. True Biblical faith is confident obedience to God’s word in spite of circumstances or consequences. This faith operates quite simply. God speaks and we hear His Word. We trust His Word and act on it no matter what the circumstances

are or what the consequences may be. The circumstances may be impossible, and the consequences frightening and unknown; but we obey God's Word just the same and believe Him to do what is right and what is best.

Three words in *Hebrews 11:1-3* summarize what true Bible faith is: *substance, evidence, and witness.*

First, the word translated **“substance”** means literally **“to stand under, to support.”** Faith is to a Christian what a foundation is to a house: it gives confidence and assurance that he will stand.

Second, word describing what faith is, is translated **“evidence” and means “conviction.”**

Third, the word **“WITNESS”** (*“obtained a good report”* KJV) is an important word in Hebrews 11. It occurs not only in verse 2, but twice in verse 4, once in verse 5, and once in verse 39. The summary in *Hebrews 12:1* calls this list of men and women "so great a cloud of witnesses." They are witnesses to us because God witnessed to them.

The writer of Hebrews makes it clear that faith is a very practical thing (*Heb. 11:3*), in spite of what unbelievers say. Faith enables us to understand what God does. Faith enables us to see what others cannot see (note *Heb. 11:7, 13, 27*). As a result, faith enables us to do what others cannot do!

II. WHAT FAITH DOES (*Hebrews 11:4-7*)

- ◇ Faith Caused Abel to Worship God (*v. 4*) (*Gen. 4:1-10*)
- ◇ Faith Caused Enoch to Walk with God (*vv. 5-6*)

The hallmark of Enoch’s life was that **“he pleased God.”** Look with me at *1 Cor. 10:1-5*, especially look and note *verse 5*, **“with many of them God was NOT WELL-PLEASED.”** *Numbers 13* tells us who God is talking about. These are the people Paul spoke about in *1 Cor. 5:1-5*, these are the people who did not please God by **FAITH** and Look at What Happened!

1. They Doubted Gods Word *Num.13:1-25*
2. The Majority Discouraged God’s people *vs. 26-33.*
3. The People Defied God’s Will *Num.14:1-10*

- ◇ Faith Caused Noah to Work for God (*v. 7*)

What does *2 Cor. 5:7* say; **“For we walk by FAITH and not BY SIGHT.”** You see without faith we cannot please God and therefore, we must continually LOOK UP to our Father and Saviour to guide us and help us to walk by FAITH and please Him our Heavenly Father.